Production of African Cat Fish in Punjab

295. SHRI DHARAMPAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite ban on the culture and sale of the African Cat Fish (Clarian Gariepinus) known as Thai Magur, which is harmful to the indigenous Fish fauna, the fish is being cultured in Punjab and other parts of the country; and

(b) if so, the details of preventive measures including legal support Government propose to take at national level to stop the propagation of this exotic magur?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The State Government of Punjab has informed that African Cat Fish (Clarias Gariepinus) known as Thai Magur has illegally entered in the State. Similar information was received earlier from States of Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.

(b) The Government has already constituted a Committee at national level on introduction of exotic aquatic species in the country. On the basis of decision taken by the Committee all the State Governments were informed to take steps to destroy the stock of Thai Magur. The States have also been requested not to introduce any exotic fish in the respective States without official sanction by the above Committee and also to take suitable measures to stop the entry of fish seed of exotic magur from West Bengal. On the basis of request received from the Punjab Government, the Government of West Bengal has been requested to issue necessary instructions to stop the entry of exotic banned fish at the airport, seaport and railway stations. Executive orders of the Government regarding unauthorized introduction of exotic magur has been upheld by the Hon'ble High Court of Andhra Pradesh. The States were informed of the above High Court decision for taking suitable action at their end. The State Governments have taken preventive measures to deal with the unauthorized introduction of above exotic fish.